# GUIDE TO THE MT9 LIBYAN BEDOUIN FILE

The MT9 Libyan Bedouin file is concerned with the Arabic-speaking nomadic and partially sedentarized Bedouin tribes living in the Libyan Desert, specifically within Cyrenaica and the Western Desert of Egypt. Material on groups living within the Siwa Oasis in northwestern Egypt and within the southern cases (e.g., Kharga) is not included. Most of the material in the file deals with the Cyrenaican Bedouin as described by Peters and Evans-Pritchard and their closely related kinsmen, the Awlad (Aulad) 'Ali of the northern coast of Egypt between Alexandria and the Libyan border.

There are nine sources in the file, all of them in English. The major sources in the file are 1: Obermeyer, 2: Mohsen, and 3: Evans-Pritchard, all of them by anthropologists. 1: Obermeyer is concerned with the community of al-Qasr near the town of Marsa Matruh on the Egyptian coast and is basically an analysis of the political structure of the Bedouin of al-Qasr. It also contains general historical background and discussions of ecology, economy, kinship, and social organization. 2: Mohsen is an analysis of the way disputes are settled among the Awlad 'Ali, but also contains material on the ecological and historical backgrounds of the area, tribal organization, political structure, leadership, and marriage as a form of contractual relationship. 3: Evans-Pritchard is concerned with the origin and development of the Sanusiya Order in Cyrenaica, which resulted in a strong and effective political organization for the whole area. It contains ethnographic and historical information and is strong on the relations of the Order with foreign governments (Turkish, British, and Italian). Three sources by Emrys Peters (4: Peters, 5: Peters, and 6: Peters) discuss lineage and political organization, the feud, and the family among the Cyrenaican Bedouin. 7: Abou-Zeid discusses the

sedentarization of nomads in the Egyptian Western Desert and Egyptian government projects in the area. 8: Kennett discusses bloodmoney among the Western Desert tribes and 9: Murray gives some data on the culture history and tribal organization of the Awlad 'Ali and a few other groups. Brief introductions to the culture of the Bedouin can be found in chapter 2 of 3: Evans-Pritchard and in 7: Abou-Zeid. The file contains a great deal of information on socio-political and religious organization, and limited data on other aspects of Bedouin culture. Therefore, it can be used for a number of comparative purposes, but is not a well-rounded file. The researcher should note the specific area or tribal focus of each source used, since it is not clear how homogeneous the culture is. There are differences since the basic settlement pattern is changing from a nomadic-seminomadic way of life to a sedentary one. The file was processed in 1974-1975.]

## MARKING DECISIONS

'ailat--the lineage into which a "clan" is divided and hence the sections of a tribe in which these lineages are found--613/619

Arab administrators under Italian rule; elites or townspeople of mixed ethnic origin--563

'awaaqil--political authority groups composed of tertiary groups--613/571/692

'awaiyid--recognized legal codes--671

baraka--blessing or spiritual power--778

barawa--to sever social ties with undesirable persons; banishment--675/681

biyut (sing. bait)--small lineages or extended families with a depth of 5 to 6 generations from present day to their founders--613

Corporations--groups constituting a single community in the summer, interlinked by reference to an ancestor 4 or 5 ascending generations away: also called "tertiary groups"--621/613

daraieb--tribal ways--671

fatha--the beginning chapter of the Koran; the initial ceremony in marriage, having the effect of a contract--779/584

Governor--although a political position established by the Egyptian government, it is usually occupied by a Bedouin--635

Grand Sanusi--head of the Sanusi Order--793

iktitab--tribal adoption of a person or groups into the tribe--563/619

'izba--a multi-nucleated settlement or cluster--621/361

kabara--a face-saving compensation of fine--558/681

laf--the process by which unrelated stranger groups graft themselves through some fiction onto the genealogical tree of of a clan or tribe--608/619

Marabtin--as marabouts or holy men--792; as "client tribes" --619

mardi--a mediator and go-between of some status within a bait--627/554/628

mi'ad--the public hearing--627/628

mintaqa--a subdivision of a tribal area into smaller units--631/423

mudirs--sub-district heads--634

nagei--camps; primary communities--621

naja--the extended family--596

nazzar--an expert who assesses the amount of compensation due for inflicted wounds--683/463

qabila--a tribe or primary tribal division--619
rajal khair--third party arbitrators--627
rajal salih--a third party arbitrator and a holy man--627/792
Sanusi order--an order of Sufis (Darwishes) who are Sunni or Orthodox Muslims--795
shaib--head of the extended family--596
shaikhs--general information on these headmen will be found in 554; specific information on their roles as heads of kin groups, tribes, or religious groups will be marked for 614, 613, 619, or 793; specific information on shaikhs as political representatives of tribal segments in a district--634
'umda--in rural areas, headman of the village and immediate surroundings--622; representatives of tribal segments within districts (according to Mohsen)--634
wakils--a guardian of a girl, generally the father, but if dead or an invalid then the brothers or uncle--429/593